

WHAT WILL A MAN GAIN

BY

EMBRACING CHRISTIANITY?

BY

T. C. MITTER



Calcutta

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P R E F A C E.

This discourse was read by me in the Hall of the General Assembly's Institution (my *Alma Mater*) on the 26th February, 1876. As a large number of my educated countrymen have very indistinct notions of Christianity, which I believe is one of the causes why they do not consider its claims, I now print it, in the hope that the perusal of this discourse may lead the reader to enquire "*What will a man gain by embracing Christianity?*" It is my sincere prayer that the reader may be eventually drawn to Him who is the *Way*, the *Life*, and the *Truth*, even the *Lord Jesus Christ*.

I beg to add that a few alterations and additions have been made since the delivery of the discourse in 1876.

J. C. MURDER

MOULISRAKHA,

23rd November, 1881

WHAT WILL A MAN GAIN BY EMBRACING CHRISTIANITY?

GENTLEMEN,

I TAKE it for granted that most of you, if not all, are seeking to know the true religion. Your presence here this evening leads me to think that you believe in an All wise, Just and Merciful God, and that you also believe in the immortality of the soul; and that your future condition will depend much on your conduct in this world. The subject of my lecture not only pre-supposes that you are seeking after the truth but that your attention might have, at some period of your lives, been called to consider the claims of Christianity. The subject further supposes that you have not been able to close with the terms of the offer, either that you do not understand them import fully, or that you consider them to be unreasonable; and that if you embraced the Christian religion, you think it would not do you any good.

2 The present age is considered to be an age of progress, and doubtless we are in a better position than our forefathers were. Science has done much to expand our views, and has enabled us to see the relation of one material object to another. It has given us facility to command creature comforts with very great ease, and whatever is conducive to the material improvement and happiness of man it has taught us the means of attaining them. In one thing however

its success has not been great. It has not brought man nearer to his Creator than he was before.

3 The tendency of *Modern Philosophy* is to drive out the *Creator* from the universe by a species of reasoning which does *not distinctly* assert that there is no God, but that He is *unknown* or to lead the student to adopt *Pantheism*. Those who maintain that God is unknown, that is, He may exist without our being able to know Him start from this standpoint, that we cannot know things *per se*, but only through their *phenomena*, and the relation which they bear to one another. Our knowledge according to them is *relative*, and they say, that since our knowledge does not extend beyond the *relations* of things the external world is not sufficient to lead us to a knowledge of God. This is called the doctrine of *Relativity*, and from it they argue that as a logical sequence springs the doctrine of *Nescience*.

4 We contend that the phenomena do not exist apart from the objects of which they are but manifestations, and since by certain harmonies, and their adaptation to each other we are led to infer a *Final Cause* we must say, that so far we have a knowledge of God. Again admitting that our knowledge is *phenomenal* and *relative*, it does not follow that we are quite ignorant of God. The province of religion is to teach the relation in which God stands to us, and if we have this knowledge, it is enough. The knowledge on which we act in the daily business of life is *relative* and why should we refuse to act on the same kind of

knowledge in the matter of religion ? We know that our knowledge in every branch of science is *relative*, but nevertheless we do not cease to acquire more knowledge of those sciences, and while we are zealous of acquiring knowledge in all its lower branches it seems strange, that because religion does not profess to be speculative, and that we cannot know God Himself, that we should ignore His existence and not act upon the knowledge we have of Him from His works of creation and providence.

To say that we cannot have any knowledge whatever beyond that which is derived from the generalized laws of experience, which make up the *Positive* sciences, is to say that we can have no *knowledge* of the mind, *human* and *divine*. The principles of the *Positivist Philosopher* lead to materialism, and his philosophy at least is a *negative one*. The *Positive Philosophy* "says little," does not busy itself with the beginning of the universe, if the universe had a beginning, nor yet with what happens to living things plants animals men after their death, or at the consummation of ages, if the ages had a consummation. Positivism cannot tell us what becomes of the soul after death. It is conversant with the physical laws of the world, but is ignorant of *another law*, which obtains in our world, *viz.*, the Moral Law. Positivism does not ignore the existence of the mind, *human* and *divine* but it is an attempt to prove that our knowledge of God is absolutely nothing. Now when the existence of the mind is taken away from the sphere of

our knowledge, there can be no such thing as the Moral Law, which supposes that man owes certain obligations to a Supreme Being, and that those obligations can only be fulfilled by a living being who has a mind.

5. *Modern Philosophy*, I have mentioned, also leads to *Pantheism*. A short paragraph from the Biographical History of Philosophy of Mr. Lewis will give an idea of what is understood by *Pantheism*. "What is the *nonmenon* which is beneath all phenomena? We see every where transformations perishable and perishing yet there must be something beneath which is imperishable and immutable, what is it? We see a wondrous universe peopled with wondrous beings, yet none of these beings exist *per se*, but *per aliud*: they are not the authors of their existence, they do not rest upon their *own reality* but on a *greater reality*, on that of the *to hen kai to, pan*. What is the reality? Spinoza answers, it is *Substance*, that is, the thing which is standing under all phenomena supporting and giving them a reality. Nothing exists which does not exist in this substance. It is the absolute existence, and it is (you may call it) God. All that exist, exist in and by God, and the universe is but a manifestation of God. He only is one reality, and that is the *Absolute Existence*. At first sight, one would think that Pantheism was inculcated by the Apostle Paul, who has said, "in Him we live, move, and have our being" But certainly the Apostle did not mean that God

and men are identical beings. He has in this verse simply taught that we do not exist independently of God, but that we are dependent on Him. The Pantheist does not believe in the duality of existence with him matter and mind are two attributes of the one underlying substance and what he calls God is but a *metaphysical* abstraction. His system does not teach that there is a *personal God*. The *Absolute Existence*, according to him, is devoid of intelligence and will, and is not the Moral Governor of the universe. Now, if we are only but manifestations of God, and do not exist as separate beings from Him, we cannot be under any obligations to Him. We cease to be responsible beings, for whom are we to be responsible to, when the Creator and creature are identical beings. In speaking of the results of Pantheism Dr. Luthardt writes thus, "Pantheism annihilates religion, for its God is not a personal God, to whom I can occupy a personal relation, whom I can love, in whom I can trust, to whom I can pray whom I can approach, and address as my friend, but only the power of necessity beneath which I must bow, the universal life in which I must lose myself. Pantheism abolishes the very postulates of morality; for all the distinctions of good and evil are but different manifestations of one absolute principle. Consequently they cease to be actual moral contrasts. What we call evil is in truth as necessary as what we call good; how then can we condemn what is necessary? Pantheism destroys hope. For as the flower fades in

autumn never to blossom again so is man swallowed up in the stream of existence, to be found no more ; all is over with him The flower may be placed in the herbarium and a man may live in the remembrance of posterity ; but all is over with him. It is but your egotism, replies the Pantheist that makes you unwilling to come utterly to an end, since, however, it is God Himself who has placed such "egotism" in our hearts, it cannot but be truth. *

The Pantheist does not deny that harmony and purpose are both visible in the universe, but as his system annihilates *will* and *intelligence* from the *absolute existence*, the universe is without a Being, who regulates the movements of the whole which produce the unity, and that the system is as bad as Atheism is. It has been said justly that the *ontology* and *ethics* of Pantheism may be summed up in one sentence, "Whatever *is*, is, and there is neither *right* nor *wrong*, but all is *fate* and *nature*."

6. Believing that God exists, we believe that He is our Creator, and that we owe allegiance to Him. There can be no religion when it is denied that man owes allegiance to God, and that God is the rewarder of them that seek Him I do not think that any of you here believe that you are not a *moral agent*, and that there is not a *Moral Governor* in the universe I hope you believe that God has given his *law* even in the constitution of our minds.

* The above has only been recently inserted from the 5th edition of Dr. Luthardt's *Fundamental Truths of Christianity*, translated by Sophia Taylor

But is God's law still operative, and do we discern it distinctly? Are our actions in accordance with the *Moral Law*? The Christian, you know, will answer these questions in the negative. He believes that the *Moral Law*, though originally given in the conscience of man has been considerably effaced from it, and that a complete code of the *Moral Law* is to be found in the *Decalogue*, which as explained by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, comprehends two sets of duties, but is included in the word "Love"; and so far as the conduct of man does not come up to the requirements of this *Law*, so far does he fall short of his obligations. Both the Bible and experience testify that man owing to the depravity of his heart has retained but a very scanty knowledge of God and of his Moral Law. The works of Creation and of Providence were not sufficient to keep man free from idolatry and other sins. Gradually the Gentile nations lost sight of God, and their vision became dim and their hearts were estranged from God. Conscience became darkened and feeble, and man gave himself to the gratification of lust, even to the dishonor of his own body, and the whole earth was filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, murder, deceit and hatred to God.

7. Such was the condition of the heathen world in the times of the Apostles, as has been described by St. Paul in the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans. Their own writers have not been less severe than the Apostle when referring to their moral condition.

See Juvenal-Sat , I , 87 ; II , 37 , III., 62 , VI., 203. Seneca, Epistle XCVII. Tacitus Hist. Germania XIX. More or less this is the spiritual condition of countries where the people have not retained their knowledge of God, and where the influence of Christianity has not been felt. As regards India, it may be conceded that a few among our countrymen are not idolators but is not this to be traced to the indirect influence of Christianity? You who read English books cannot but become acquainted with Christian principles, for English Literature is so saturated with them. It would be a matter of surprise if those who are well read in English Literature have not their minds expanded, so as to see the folly of idolatry and superstition.

8. When we read the religious history of India in its early days we notice that our ancestors worshipped inanimate objects. Subsequently, the worship of birds, beasts and reptiles was introduced into the *Hindu Pantheon*, and I have no doubt that if you were to study the history of religion all over the world, you would be convinced of the fact that, although before the fall, the light of nature and of providence, and the light as revealed in the conscience were sufficient for our first parents, they were not so after the fall, and that it was revelation which could only preserve a knowledge of true religion as it did among the Jews.

9. Fallen humanity is reluctant to realize that man has lost his original estate, and it hopes it can obtain salvation by its innate power to do good, with-

out any intervention on the part of God. But what is salvation? This brings me to the subject of my discourse *viz*, what does Christianity offer, and will true acceptance of this religion by us do us any good?

10. The traditions of every civilized and uncivilized nation on the face of the earth speak of man having been at one time in a state of happiness and innocence. I need hardly remind you of the golden age of the ancients, which in our country was called the Satyayug. In the historical records of the Old Testament however, do we find any authentic account of man's original state, and of his subsequent fall. Whether or not one believes the records of the Old Testament to be inspired writings, and that the sin of our first parents brought about man's fall he cannot close his eyes to what he now daily sees all around him. All that transpires around us informs us that men are not quite happy. Every effort that has been made by man to ameliorate his condition has partially succeeded. Enormous crimes are still being perpetrated. Fell diseases are still rampant in many places systems of gigantic lies have been devised, and continue to be believed in. The voice of nature, which at one time sufficed for an unfallen humanity, no longer speaks in clear accents. The understanding has become darkened, and the conscience feeble and man's will is no longer regulated by God's will, so that the laws of God are being violated without any remorse on the part of the offenders. Instead of good will towards one another, there are strife and envy among men, and it often happens, that in the

act of dispensing charity there lurks a desire to obtain a good name is a motive. We learn from the Bible that sin has estranged man from his Creator, and that he has become a rebel. His affections are no longer pure and holy and instead of endeavouring to walk conformably to God's commandments, he does whatever contributes to his temporary enjoyments. The fall has so vitiated his nature that whatever good works man may do to avert God's displeasure they are not acceptable to Him. It has not only affected the human body by rendering it liable to disease, but it has also rendered the members of the body instruments of unrighteousness. Even in countries where Christianity is the national religion, the old man is still very strong. Wherever the Gospel has not been sincerely embraced, and its precepts have not been strictly followed out, there have been deceit, fraud, strife and envy, and it is a matter of regret that we still hear of wars and rumours of wars.

11 The greatest evil which the fall has entailed on man is death. This means not only the separation of the soul from the body, but it means that man has lost the power of doing good, so as to be acceptable in the sight of God. In death is involved the loss of God's image, and his being under condemnation. His death also implies that the soul and body are liable to be separated from God for ever. This is called eternal death.

12 The history of the fall is recorded in the third chapter of Genesis, to which I beg to refer you.

In reading the account of this event in Genesis we notice the agency of a being of whose existence there are no veritable records in creation. Because the existence of angels is a matter of revelation, those who do not believe the Bible to be inspired, repudiate the existence of such a class of beings. But since the Bible professes to teach a system of religion, a knowledge of which we could never have obtained without God revealing it to us it is to be expected that there may be many things revealed in it which the unassisted reason of man could never have discovered. Whatever things revelation may disclose, and however unable we may be to comprehend them fully, it is to be noted that we are not incapable of understanding the reasonableness of such revealed truths. Does the existence of angels appear to be an unreasonable fact? No it does not. Once admit that there is a great gulf between animate and inanimate objects and that there is a link in the scale of beings and you must then admit, that as there are various orders of existence between the Creator and His creatures, so there is nothing *improbable* in the fact, that there exists another class of beings, who are superior to men, but who are disembodied spirits, only lower than the Creator in the scale of existence. The belief in the existence of beings, who are spiritual in their nature, but are different from men has been universal and to this belief must be traced the tales about *Fairies* and *Nymphs*.

13. Not only has the tradition of the fall been

preserved in the legends of many nations, but the fact that the serpent is the great enemy of man is believed by many nations. In the Zend Avesta the worker of evil is the same person in name as that in Genesis. In the former it is *Nacus*, while in the latter it is *Nachas*. In the narrative in Genesis we read that it was the Serpent who deceived Eve and by a reference to the Book of Revelation, we observe that this Serpent was Satan himself in the garb of the Serpent—"And the great *Dragon* was cast out, that old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, he was cast into the earth, and angels were cast with him." 'Rev. xii, 9'. It will be seen from this chapter that Satan fought with the angels of God and that being discomfited he was driven out of heaven, although he succeeded in drawing down a third part of the angels.' Our learned countryman, the Revd K M Bannerji, in his *Arian Witness*, remarks, "that it is curious that not only have the Indo-Arians, a legend about the Serpent race among them, who are known as *Nagas*, and whom they consider as demi gods, but the curse pronounced against the Serpent finds confirmation in the story of King Nahasha. The conversation which Judhistir is said to have had with Nahasha as recorded in the Serpent section of the Mahabharat, and which Dr. Bannerji quotes is herein given. It shows that pride was the principal cause of a change in the condition of King Nahasha.

Judhistir said : ' Oh thou best of the wise That you

have such excellent intelligence Why do you ask me what is, or what ought to be known to you? How has delusion entered thee who knewest all things, and wast a dweller of heaven and a worker of wonders? This perplexes me The Serpent replied thus. " Prosperity deludes even the heirs of intelligence I believe that all persons living at ease fall into delusion And so I myself, O Yudhistir, was filled with pride by the delusion of worldly power. But now I am addressing you being awakened to better thoughts by my fall. You have, O great king done me a great service. By speaking with you, a holy person, my curse has become attenuated Formerly I moved through the sky on a celestial car. Intoxicated with self-conceit I regarded no one but my self All the inhabitants of these worlds, Brahmanical, Rishis, Gods, Gundharvas, Jakhas, Rukhasas, Panoughs paid me tribute. Such was the power of my gaze that on what creature I fixed my eyes I straightway robbed him of his energy. A thousand of the great sages bore my vehicle. That misconduct it was O king, which hurled me from my high estate For then I touched with my foot the man, Agastya, who was carrying me Agastya in his wrath cried out to me 'Fall thou Serpent.' I hurled therefore from that magnificent car and fallen from my prosperity as I descended headlong I felt that I had become a Serpent.

14. The consequences of the fall did not affect our first parents only, and the Bible teaches us that we all die in Adam, for he stood before God as our

covenanted head. By the disobedience of one many were made sinners." ' In Adam all die " 'That by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin and that death passed over all men, seeing that all have sinned Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me

We must remember that Adam was made by God, who, as his Creator had every right to dictate the terms on which was to depend his own happiness, as also the happiness of his posterity. Had our first parents not eaten the forbidden fruit, and thus disobeyed their God, they and their posterity would have been happy ; but as the representatives of their race they sinned against God, their posterity have suffered in consequence

15 In the curse pronounced on the Serpent, God said, "that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the Serpent ' and so the promise of a Saviour was made. "As by the disobedience of one many were made sinners so by the obedience of one many shall be made righteous." Though Christ was not born till 4,000 years afterwards, the Christian Religion was doubtless *promulgated* immediately after the fall. We learn from the Bible that there existed believers before the death of Christ who have been saved by their faith in a promised Messiah. The ceremonial worship of the Jewish religion led the worshipper to look forward to the seed of the woman as the great sacrifice, which was to be offered up for the expiation of man's sins. The prophecies of the Old

Testament also mentioned that Christ would be born to save his people, and it is curious to note that at the time of Christ's advent Suetonius, Tacitus and Josephus mention that there was a general expectation of a coming change in the Roman world. The first named historian goes so far as to say that the expectation of a *better time to come* would be fulfilled in the birth of a Jewish ruler. He says, 'Throughout the East an old and established opinion was disseminated, that it was decreed by fate that they who were to possess the sovereignty of the world were to arise from Judea.'

The following passage from the 4th Eclogue of Virgil is prophetic, and points to one who was to be the restorer of peace in the world —

"The last great age, foretold by sacred rhymes
Renews its finished course; Saturnian times
Roll round again, and mighty years, begun
From their first orb, in radiant circles run
The base, degenerate, lion offspring ends,
A golden progeny from heaven descends —
See labouring nature calls thee to sustain
The nodding frame of heaven, and earth and main!
See to them base restored, earth, seas and air,
And joyful ages from behind in crowding rank appear."

Virgil's Eclogues

Some of you might have read in the Gospel of St. Mathew that after Christ was born wise men from the East (Persia) came to Bethlehem, enquiring "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" for we have seen His star in the East and are come to worship him

16 Readers of the Old Testament Scriptures are aware that in the Jewish economy the sacrifice of animals was considered very necessary in the performance of religious duties : and it is the Jews only who were taught to believe that the sacrifice of animals was typical of that sacrifice which Christ in due time offered upon Calvary. Both among the Greeks and Hindus, the sacrifice of animals was considered to be a meritorious act but they could not account for the origin of this institution. Revelation alone has taught man, that without the *shedding of blood*, there is no remission of sin. In the sacrifices of the Jewish religion, the innocent victim stood in the place of him who offered it, and the transaction showed that the punishment due to the offender was transferred to the victim.

17 Revelation teaches us that God is holy, and that He cannot tolerate sin, for it is opposed to His *Moral Nature*. Both Revelation, and the testimony of our conscience point out to us, that there is a *Moral Law* in the universe, which is called the *Law of Righteousness*, and that the highest function of God as *Moral Governor* is to sustain this *Law*. You are aware that the old idea that the will of God is the original ground of moral obligations has long since been exploded. *Modern Ethical Philosophy* teaches us a different thing altogether. We have now learned that the distinctions of *right* and *wrong*, *justice*, and *injustice*, *truth* and *falsehood* are in the very nature of things *necessary*, *independent* and *eternal*. The princi-

ple of a *Moral Law* existing *antecedent* to and *independent* of God's will involves the idea of *responsibility*, without which there can be no freedom of will.

We have also a strong instinctive conviction which affirms that sin is followed by suffering. The belief that sin will be punished is *universal, innate* and *necessary*. Sin is punished not that it is expedient to do so or that it tends to promote God's glory. The belief that God punishes sin rests on the *fact* that God, as the *Moral Governor* of the Universe punishes sin in recognition of the *Law of Righteousness*, which has been given to us in the constitution of our nature.

18. While the Bible reveals to us that Almighty God abhors sin and that the consequences of sin are dreadful, it also reveals to us that *Jesus Christ* died for us, and having made an expiation of our sins, He has provided a means by which all, who believe in Him are pardoned of their sins, and are reconciled to God. This is called the *Atonement*, inasmuch as it brings two opposite parties, in one with each other. In the Hebrew language the word *Atonement* signifies covering, and by the death of *Christ* as our *substitute* the sins of His elect people are covered, for when sought for, they shall not be found. Atonement also includes the idea of reconciliation, and in *Christ's Atonement* both these benefits are secured to His people. What, it may be asked, gives efficacy to *Christ's Atonement* as the cause of our justification? The efficacy is secured by the

fact that *Christ* expiated for our sins as our *Moral Governor*, and that *Almighty God* has been pleased to recognize in that *sacrifice*, the homage that has been paid to *His Law*

19. Some persons may persuade themselves to think that by repentance and reformation they are reconciled to God. They seem to think that repentance is a punishment itself. They say that the sorrow we feel for sin is so agonizing, and the contemplation that we have incurred God's displeasure cannot but make the penitent unhappy. We Christians think it so, but we ask can any one say that this is sufficient to satisfy divine justice. Has this doctrine, that God will forgive us on mere repentance, the sanction of His revelation? Where is the assurance that by repentance we are reconciled to God. On the contrary, do we not feel that the more thorough our repentance is the more we are convinced of two things, *viz*, first, our repentance (which consists of sorrow for sin and a desire to mend our lives) is *inadequate*, for whatever obedience by a new life we can render to God is tainted with sin, and bears marks of imperfection; second, that sin deserves to be *punished*? We have a strong intuitive *conviction* that obedience to God's laws is *imperative*, and that God cannot relax the precepts of His *moral law*, and that violation of those laws will be followed by penalties. Our *moral nature* tells us that God, as our *Moral Governor*, cannot look upon sin with indifference. We have at the same time another strong intuitive conviction, that God is ready to forgive, and that

although He is anxious to sustain the authority of His *law*, He will not destroy us in exacting the full penalty, but that He will show His mercy.

I believe that the different systems of religions which have been invented by man from time to time is the result of this *intuitive* conviction that God is ready to forgive. But it is only in Christianity that we see that both these strong intuitive convictions are realized.

For we find that Christ by His death on the cross has vindicated God's law, as also He has manifested God's love to fallen humanity.

It may, however, be asked could not God save fallen humanity by any other means than by the death of Christ? In reply we might say, He might have devised any other plan if he chose to do it. But it must be borne in mind that it is God who had the right to originate the plan of man's redemption for He being the offended party could alone fix the terms of our reconciliation. We, however, learn from the New Testament that it had pleased Almighty God to fore-ordain that we should be saved by Christ's death, and hence our Lord while praying in the Garden said, "O my Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not as I will but as thou wilt."

20 In the Scriptures we read passages like these—
 "Upon the wicked He shall rain snares fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. Cursed is every one that con-

tinueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them “ The wages of sin is death.

The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. These denunciations against sin are appalling. The language used in these passages may appear to some to show that God has the same feelings as we have but it must be borne in mind, that in the Bible human language is used for our comprehension and that they declare nothing more than this that Almighty God disapproves of sin, is displeased with it, and that the consequences of sin to us must be dreadful.

21. Christ made an atonement for our sins. He the Son of God, became incarnate. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost was born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. The third day He rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. He became incarnate, and as our substitute He did what was required of us to do. Christ has satisfied God's law by keeping His commandments, and by paying the penalty of our sins. Among the Jews, there was a custom that if any one became poor, and had been sold for his debts, a near kinsman of his could redeem him. The word was made flesh and the Son of God by becoming man, became our kinsman nay, our elder brother.

22. Our salvation through Christ is the gift of

God but it is conditional that is those who have faith in Christ as their *substitute* can on y hope to be saved. When we speak of faith as the condition on which God saves his people we do not mean to say that faith is the meritorious cause of our salvation, but we mean that it is indispensably necessary as the instrument by which we became partakers of the benefits of Christ's death and passion. The only meritorious cause of our salvation is the work of Christ. Those who trust to Christ as their Saviour are no longer under condemnation, for they are made just by the righteousness of Christ being imputed to them, and they are also reconciled to God. By the sacrifice He has offered up for us, he has become our High Priest, and in that capacity intercedes for us. While on earth He prayed for all who were given to Him. He prayed that they might be kept from evil, and sanctified by the truth. He prayed for unity among His people, and that the world might know Him. He is now interceding for His people before His Father in heaven. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is it that condemneth? It is Christ that died yea rather that is risen again who is ever on the right hand of God who maketh intercession for us. —Romans viii 33 & 34. As Intercessor Christ stands before God as our advocate pleading, for us, and refuting all the charges that are brought against us by Satan by the Law by the World and by the Conscience. He now prays for the happiness of His people, for the forgiveness of their sins and for

their being made holy As our Intercessor, Christ presents to God all our worship, and service, which being performed in faith are rendered acceptable to Him

23 Not only are we justified by Christ, that is our sins are forgiven to us, and we are regarded as just before God, by the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, but we learn from the Scriptures, that in the matter of our redemption there is concerned another person, *viz.*, the Holy Ghost, who applies the remedy provided by the Son of God The office of the Holy Ghost is to convince us of our sin and misery, and of our inability to please God, to enlighten us in the knowledge of Christ and renew our wills and to teach us that without holiness no man shall enter into heaven He enlightens us in the knowledge of Christ by enabling us to know that He is our King, Prophet and Priest Under His teaching we learn that Christ's atonement is all sufficient to save us. By renewing our wills, and imparting new dispositions in the soul, He leads us to embrace the Saviour, and to lead a new life. The believer in Christ is not made perfect in holiness in a day but the work of sanctification in his heart is a progressive one He dies more and more unto sin, and lives unto righteousness. His affections are now set on things above, and not on the things of the earth Justification is an act of God and refers to a change of our outward condition, that is our being released from the penalties of our sins, and our being reconciled to God. Whereas

in Sanctification, the work 's inward, and relates to what takes place in the heart

By the atonement of Christ we are not only justified and sanctified but we are also adopted into God's family. As sinners we are God's enemies. We have lost His image and are no longer regarded as his children. We no longer share His love nor enjoy Him, nor hold communion with Him. Though born the children of God, we do not love our neighbours as we love ourselves. But by our adoption into God's family our relationship to our neighbours takes a new turn. We then seek to advance their spiritual welfare, and we regard one another as members of the same family. We can now come to God's throne with freedom. We now enjoy His protection and sympathy and are strengthened to ward off the attacks of our spiritual enemies. The angels of God minister to those who are heirs of His salvation. Having become the heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, believers become entitled to all His promises, and receive a name which is above every other name even that they are called the sons of God

24. I now proceed with the other benefits which believers receive in this world as the fruits of Christ's atonement. They have been fully described in the Westminster Assembly's Catechism. The following epitome has been made from the Assembly's shorter Catechism —

Believers have the assurance of God's love.

Their faith leads them to hope that God will fulfil His promises to them. They are assured that God is willing to receive all who believe in His Son, Jesus Christ. The assurance that God loves them begets in them their love to God which is the foundation of our duties.

Intimately connected with this assurance is peace of conscience. It arises from our conviction, that our sins have been pardoned, and that we have been restored to God's favour. The office of conscience is to approve and disapprove of what we do, and her deliverance would accuse us before God. But when we have received Christ by faith our guilt is removed by the sprinkling of His blood on the conscience; and the conviction that we have been pardoned of our sins generates a calm in the soul which a Christian only can realise. The assurance of the removal of our guilt by Christ's righteousness has sustained believers at the time of their trial, and has divested their minds of the horrors of death. Christians when leaving the world can alone look upon death as the gate to heaven.

25. Christians in this world have joy in the Holy Ghost. The contemplation that they enjoy spiritual means, and that the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, and that by believing in Christ, they hope to enjoy God's favour and that God's Holy Spirit dwells in them begets joy in their hearts. They are the temples of the Holy Spirit, and they have the assurance that they will be kept from evil. Their eyes are now opened they

understand the Holy Scriptures, and God's dealings with them. They now see that God is all glorious, while they are convinced of their own loathsomeness they see the greatness of God in all things, and this excites their joy. No man can be converted to God, unless he is convinced of his sin and misery and how many a dark night a penitent must have passed, before he could look up to the Son of God as one who could alone remove his sorrow. But when brought to the Saviour his sorrow is transformed into joy, and there is balm poured into his broken spirit.

26. The believer in Christ increases in grace. The Christian life is a life of progress. If it do not advance in holiness it must deteriorate. The Christian increases in his love, affections, and holy desires. He increases in his faith in Christ. His love to Christ increases daily. Though he may be beset by temptations, he endeavours to keep himself from the way of ungodliness and the chief desire of his heart is to glorify God.

27. The Christian religion promises certain blessings to the believer at death. At death he is made perfect in holiness. Heb xii 23. While on earth he is not free from sin but there is a difference between him and the man of the world. While the dispositions and inclinations of the man of the world are continually towards evil the tendency of the believer's heart is to become holy, even as his Heavenly Father is holy, and though in his weakness he may yield to temptation, he does not delight in

sin. On earth he pants after his deliverance from the power of sin, and owing to the corruption of his heart, he does things, which he knows he ought not to do. Death, however, translates him to a different sphere, when the filthy communications of the wicked no longer vex his spirit. In heaven he enjoys perfect liberty to sing God's praise. He is now restored to the image of God.

28. At death the spirits of believers pass immediately into glory. In Luke xxiii, 43., Luke xvi. 22., Rev. xiv. 13, Phil. i 23 2 Cor v. 1 and Rev. viii, 3. And their bodies though they may now lie in their graves will rise at the resurrection morn. The Bible nowhere teaches, that there is an intermediate state, where the soul of the deceased are purged from their sins. Those who believe in an intermediate state lay great stress upon verses 18, 19, and 20 of the 1st Epistle of Peter chapter 3. But if we look into those verses with some attention, we shall find that the Apostle is exhorting Christians to suffer persecutions, and in doing this he places the example of Christ before them; and what he says is this. Suffer even for well doing, just as your Master has done, even He who was put to death in the flesh but was quickened by the Spirit, that Spirit by which he went and preached unto the spirits which are now in prison, even those who were disobedient in the days of Noah. These verses do not mean that Christ, during the three days he was in the grave, went and preached to the dead, but it refers to his resurrection by that Spirit,

who during the days of Noah preached to those who were disobedient and are now in their graves That the words "Quickened by the Spirit," in verse 18, refers to the resurrection of Christ, is evident from the parallel passage, Chapter 1, 4 of the Epistle to the Romans I am aware that these verses and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus have been advanced as authority for the belief that there is an intermediate state, but believe once that your soul does not go to heaven or to hell after death, and you cannot escape from the doctrine of Purgatory The Roman Catholic Church is more consistent in this matter than some of the members of the Anglican Communion I have said that the parable of the rich man and Lazarus has been used by many to prove the existence of an intermediate state, but we are to bear in mind that an isolated parable without corroboration cannot prove a doctrine. When on the cross, Christ said to the penitent thief 'This day thou shalt be with me in *Paradise*. The penitent thief said unto Jesus 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into Thy kingdom' and the words mentioned before are an answer to his prayer. Christ in those words says, you have not to wait till I come again to judge the world but even this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise What consolation would it be to this thief if he was to remain in an intermediate state of which we know nothing. But supposing that the word Paradise in verse 43 of Luke xxiii, refers to an intermediate state, then we must perforce believe that our Lord is still in an intermediate state, and has

not ascended up to heaven. In the Apostles Creed we read that Christ having ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father of all. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and dead. If the penitent thief was to be with Christ in Paradise, that Paradise could not be any other place but heaven. The soul at death either goes to heaven, or to hell while the body remains in the grave till the day of resurrection. At present we cannot fully realize what the blessings of heaven would be, but they will not be carnal, at any rate. It will be unlike the heaven of the Arabian Prophet. The religion of Christ is emphatically a *Spiritual* religion and the happiness of Christians in the next world will be a continuation, in a higher degree, of all those spiritual privileges which they enjoy on earth. In heaven they will enjoy God's immediate presence, and this will gladden their hearts. There will be no let or hindrance to their singing God's praise. There shall be no night in heaven. The saints will be encompassed by the light of God's presence, and their seeing God's face will be their supreme happiness.

29. In connection with the plan of man's redemption by Christ the following objections have been urged, but they have been satisfactorily met by Christian apologists. I shall now attempt to give you the substance of what these apologists have said.

1stly — It has been asked, does not the atonement by Christ show that it was unjust on the part of God to let the innocent suffer for the guilty ?

2ndly If Christianity be the religion which really brings salvation to man how is it that it has not been universally made known to the children of Adam?

3rdly. The resurrection of our bodies is irreconcilable with experience, and how can bodies which are now dissolved be identified afterwards?

30 *1stly.* In meeting the first difficulty I have to observe that since Christ the Son of God has died for man it becomes evident that man was not able to satisfy divine justice. In the redemption of our souls by Christ we find that Christ has made the law honorable, and has shown his amazing love to man. Voluntarily Christ offered himself up as a sacrifice for our sins. No man compelled him to become our substitute, and when he laid down his life of his own will how can God be charged with having punished the innocent for the guilty? It can be shown from the analogy of what takes place in the visible government of the world, that in the conduct of the affairs of the world, the agency of others is largely availed of. Have we not all been infants at one time and unless our friends and relations had taken care of us, we could not have continued to exist? In this world does not one man stand in need of another man's help, and what would become of the poor and needy if they were not the recipients of the charities of others? Do we not find that much of the distress of our fellow men is removed by the assistance of their friends and others? Nay, more, are we not sometimes commanded to render assistance to others, though in doing it we may have to

put ourselves to great trouble and sufferings ? Bishop Butler says, "that in the world there is a scheme of things gradually carrying on, called the course of nature, to the carrying on of which God has appointed us in various ways to contribute and that if there were any force in the objection, the interposition of others in the natural providence of God is liable to the very same objections, to which the appointment of Christ as our Mediator is liable. In objecting to the vicarious sufferings of Christ we forget" says this divine, "that vicarious punishment is a providential appointment of every day's experience, and the objection is not an objection against Christianity, but against the whole general constitution of nature. The true explanation of the objection lies in the fact, that man is unwilling to accept the mediation of another in the matter of his salvation for he considers his own work to be sufficient and does not realize that as a sinner before God he is under condemnation and that he cannot expiate for his sins. The objection would not be made, if the objector understood well the appointments of God in the constitution of nature.

31. *2ndly* This objection also proceeds from our ignorance of the constitution of nature. Do we not see that in the world there are some men who are better gifted than others ? Have not some men more wealth strength and intellectual talents than others ? Are there not some nations who are in advance of other nations in wealth, strength and material resources ? Do we not find that while some

nations are sunk in ignorance and superstition, other nations are better educated, and have the capacity to understand the designs of God in his works of nature and of providence ? This objection supposes that men must be born at the same time which under the present state of things is impossible. Men are in a state of probation, and God has not thought it fit to reveal Himself to them at once. We all know that quinine is a powerful tonic to ward off the attacks of fever, and that it is efficacious also in other diseases. The curative power of this medicine is not universally known, and it is comparatively a short time since that the medicinal properties of the Peruvian bark were discovered. How many men must have died long before the discovery of the use of quinine. So it is with vaccination. It is now admitted that the vaccine matter when it is communicated to the human system protects it from small pox which we all know is a dreadful disease. The prophylactic power of the poison of the cow pox in preventing small-pox became generally known after the publication in 1789 of Dr. Jenner's work entitled—' An enquiry into the causes and effects of the Variolæ Vaccinæ.

I shall now advert to the art of printing. Before the art of typographical printing was invented by Guttenberg, books were written in manuscripts. The time and expense taken in preserving manuscripts were not favourable to the spread of knowledge and the consequence was that men had very little

chance of communicating their ideas to others. There were very few books before printing, and hence the ignorance which brooded over the world in the middle ages. Progress, both in acquiring a knowledge of science and of religion, depends much on reading books. Compare the progress in knowledge now with the amount of knowledge possessed by the human race before the discovery of printing and then say whether or not the discovery of this art has been the means of advancing human knowledge?

In these instances we have noticed that the discoveries they relate to have been late in the world's history, and that they are not universally known as yet. We know the good they have done, and are doing, to the human race. But it has pleased Almighty God to withhold knowledge of them from many of the human race. You do not find fault with God for this and why should you object to receive Christianity because it has not been universally published as yet. Since, however, it is now being published to you, you should endeavour to ascertain whether or not this religion is from God.

32. *3rdly.*—In meeting the objection against the resurrection of our bodies at the last day, I shall first refer to the resurrection of Christ, and endeavour to show that the doctrine of the general resurrection must be true if Christ's resurrection can be shown to be true also. The Christian religion teaches us that Christ brought life and immortality to light. It is true that some of the ancient philosophers indulged in the hope

that the soul may survive after its separation from the body, but their ideas were *dim*. How much less could they even think that after death our bodies would be raised from their graves, and be re-united to our Spirits. The resurrection of our bodies is one of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, and it is founded upon the resurrection of Christ. Archbishop Whatcley has shown why it should be considered to be a peculiar doctrine of Christianity. The Apostle St. Paul writes to the Corinthian Church, ' But it is now Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept, and if Christ be not raised your faith is vain. Ye are yet in your sins.' 1 Cor., xv., 20. Well, if Christ be risen from the grave, there is nothing which makes the resurrection of our bodies an improbable fact. Christ's resurrection was a matter of fact, and that fact has been abundantly proved by the testimony of those who had seen him after He rose from the grave. For the common sense argument of Paley in reply to Hume's objections against miracles, which he has said are contrary to experience, I beg to refer you to his work on the Evidences of Christianity. I however beg to submit the following circumstances connected with Christ's resurrection for your consideration.

33. The disciples of Christ were fearless in asserting that their master had risen from the grave. The fact of the resurrection had not only been referred to in the Gospels and Epistles but it has been noticed also in the writings of authors who were contemporaries with the first disciples. It can be shown that the first

preachers of Christianity would not desist from preaching the resurrection of their master though they had to suffer much indignity on account of their persistence in it. But why did they not desist? It is because they could not disbelieve their own senses. They had seen and handled Christ, and eaten with him after he rose from the grave. Once when they were affrighted and were led to suppose that they had seen a spirit, He said unto them : " Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts. Behold my hands and feet, that it is, Myself. Handle and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have. He challenged Thomas Didymus because he doubted his resurrection. He said to him : " Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side.' Thomas answered and said unto him : " My Lord and my God.' The testimony the disciples bore to this fact was not the result of illusion but of experience. In the face of much hostility, and at the risk of much danger to their lives, they boldly asserted that they had seen Christ after His resurrection. These disciples forsook Him at the time of His trial and yet they were resolute in making their statement of this fact. Defenceless and weak as they were, and knowing as they did that the whole Jewish nation was against them, they undertook to proclaim a fact, which, if false, they knew would be disastrous to themselves. They were not deceived themselves, nor could they be so bold to palm off on their countrymen an imposture, which they

knew their enemies had ample opportunities to expose. We all know that the enemies of Christ gave out that his body was stolen away from the grave by his disciples, but how is it that the soldiers who kept watch over the grave of Jesus were not punished? Evangelist Matthew says "So they took the money and did as they were taught, and this saying was commonly reported among the Jews until this day Has this statement been ever contradicted? No, it has not been

34 In the resurrection of Christ we see the power of God set forth in the completion of man's redemption. It was indeed a miracle. We have experience of God's power and wisdom in the works of creation and of providence, and if we bear in mind that there is a *Moral Government* in the universe of which God is Governor, we do not see why miracles should not be possible. They do not contradict our experience, inasmuch as the creation of the world out of the fiat of God's will is a miracle. They are said to be contrary to experience, but are there not *physical* as well as *moral laws* in the universe, and are not these laws to be regarded as constituting elements to form the entire government of God? People who object to miracles as being contrary to experience and contrary to the established laws of God, forget, that the material world and the laws by which it is sustained are not all which claim God's attention. Will any one say that God cannot suspend for a time the physical law, in order that the scheme of man's

salvation may be completed, even by the resurrection of Christ. We cannot say that *a priori* miracles are impossible, and whatever arguments are now brought forward against the resurrection of Christ, and the other Christian miracles, are simply in a new form, the objections which Hume has urged against the miracles, and for a complete refutation of those objections, I beg to refer you to the common sense argument of Paley in his "Evidence of Christianity."

35. We see that men who denied their master at the time of his trial, were bold to assert in the face of much opposition, that their master rose from the grave. In consequence of this testimony they bore to this fact, they had to suffer much indignity and opprobrium, nay, even death. and does not this conduct of the first preachers of Christianity appear to be miraculous? Can we say we that have experience; that men with such timid minds as the apostles had would palm off a story which would only prove to be false, and which involved so much risk to themselves, unless they had actually seen what they bore testimony to? The resurrection of Christ proves His divine mission and it is the foundation of our hope of the resurrection of our bodies at the last day.

36 It is objected that as the human body is dissolved at death, it cannot be identified afterwards: The following is submitted for your consideration. The particles of our bodies are now simply thrown off, but they are not annihilated. They still exist in other bodies and the identity of the human body does not

depend upon the sameness of the particles which constitute it. Philosophy informs us that in the course of a few years our bodies undergo a complete change, so that we become different beings at different periods of our lives. The human body, notwithstanding that it throws off constantly its constituent particles is considered to be the same body, and this is on account of the uniting power which exists in the body, which never ceases to exist while the particles of the body are thrown off. At death a change only takes place in the arrangement of the particles of our bodies, and although those particles may become assimilated to other bodies, the bodies which are in the graves now will be the same bodies when the particles are re-united to the souls of the deceased at the resurrection.

37. In referring to this objection St. Paul takes his illustration from the germination of the seed corn. Now the corn of the wheat after it has been put in the ground is apparently destroyed but by it appears with stem, leaves and fruits but it is still the old life in the seed which has reappeared and developed in a higher form. In the development of the seed-corn, a complete change has taken place but still it is the same corn which we see matured into another form, and is identical with the one that has perished. In the case of the butterfly, it is the caterpillar existing in another form, so it will be with the resurrection body. The spiritual body will be identical with the earthly one, though we may not now under

stand what the nature of that spiritual body will be "That which is sown in corruption will be raised in incorruption" Is, then, the revealed fact that our bodies will be raised from their graves, though in a different form not reconcilable with experience? The analogy of the germination of the seed corn shows that such a thing is not impossible.

38. We have seen what Christianity is. It declares to us that there is a God, who is infinite in His power wisdom and love, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. That He is the Creator, Preserver and Redeemer of our souls. That there are three persons in the Godhead, and that in the matter of our redemption, God the Father originates the plan, God the Son carries that plan into execution, and God the Holy Ghost applies to our hearts the remedy which Christ has provided for us. Mention has also been made of our condition before God as sinners against His holy laws, and of the change, both inward and outward, which is the fruit of Christ's atonement. The blessings which Christians now enjoy and hope to enjoy in the next world have also been adverted to.

39. When the claims of Christianity are placed before our countrymen, most of them are proud to refer us to their systems of philosophy, and to say that they do not require Christianity at all. But I would now ask you, do you find in these systems God's character and person delineated with such truth as is done in the Christian Scriptures? Have not these

systems failed to give us a knowledge of our relationship to God? Is there anything like that assurance in them which Christianity brings to the troubled soul in the contemplation of Christ's death, and in the hope of that happiness which awaits believers in Christ in heaven?

40. Let us look for God in the system taught by Kapil. The *Sankhya* of Kapil declares that the existence of the Supreme Being is not only *not proved*, but that it is impossible for *such a being* to be the *Creator* of the world. In this system, the origin of all things is traced to an *unintelligent* nature, which by its union with the *soul*, which is eternal, produces creation. As according to this system the *soul* is inactive, it is difficult to understand how creation could be the result of two principles or substances which are wanting in intelligence and activity. This is opposed to our knowledge of the principle of causation. Does the *Vedant* then furnish us with any correct notion of the Supreme Being? Certainly not. It teaches *Pantheism*; that is, that God is identical with the universe, and that we are a portion of Him. The result of such a system, as has already been shown, is that there is no distinction between God and His creatures, since the latter are but manifestations of Himself, and that men cease to be responsible agents. The *Naya*, it is true, attempts to prove the existence of a *Supreme Being*, but the universe, according to this system, does not come into existence by the fiat of God's will. The *Naya* teaches that the universe is educed out of the

atoms of nine eternal substances, and that the Supreme Being unites the atomic minds to souls, thereby rendering them conscious, and also unites the atoms of other substances, and develops them into the material universe. God then is not the Creator, but the Maker of the universe, and how far this falls short of the Christian idea of God. God said, Let there be light, and there was light.

41. Again, *Hindu Philosophy* gives a very inadequate idea of sin. "Sin is a want of conformity unto, or a violation of the law of God. But *Hindu Philosophy* does not contemplate it as a *moral evil*. It is simply an *intellectual fault*. As regards the origin of evil, both the *Sankhya* and the *Vedant* trace it to Nature or the Supreme. Man does not appear to have been created holy, but that the germ of all evil was imparted to individuals at the time they were produced or developed. In the *Hindu Philosophy* the chief end of man is not to glorify God, but to seek his own emancipation from transmigrations. Deliverance from transmigrations is *Mukti*, which according to the *Sankhya* and *Naya* is separation of the soul from matter. In the *Vedant*, *Mukti* is absorption into *Brahm*. The soul, when by contemplation attains this state, ceases to exist as a separate entity, and as an individual existence it is annihilated. Can such a doctrine as this satisfy our longings? *Absorption* into the deity I fancy is something, which you may wish to secure for yourselves, but on looking at the Hindu notion of it, it appears to be either annihilation or stupefaction.

The Christian looks forward to something as high as the Hindu does. He pants to become holy even as God is holy, and if there be any *absorption* at all it is to be found in the Christian religion. There the soul is not lost into the *Supreme Being*, but continues to exist as a separate existence, assimilating itself to God, by being made perfect in holiness.

42. I have not referred to the tendency of the Christian religion in promoting the social and political improvement of man. I have restricted myself to the spiritual advantages which one as an individual can derive by becoming a Christian. The benefits which Christianity confers on man are calculated to make him happy both here and hereafter; and in the prospect of such happiness I would earnestly beg of you to examine its claims. Christ has said 'Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek and ye shall find it.' and my dear friends, if you decide upon examining the claims of Christianity with an unprejudiced mind, you will with God's grace find Him, who is the *Way*, the *Life* and the *Truth*. May God bless you and draw you all to Himself, through his Son Jesus Christ, *Amen*.



